

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN .....	2
LAND USE .....	8
FUTURE LAND USE MAP.....	11
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT .....	12
NATURAL RESOURCES .....	16
TOURISM.....	18
TOURISM MAP DRAFT (FRONT SIDE) .....	21
TOURISM MAP DRAFT (BACK SIDE) .....	22
AGRICULTURE .....	23
TRANSPORTATION.....	27
DRAFT – RUCKERSVILLE RING ROAD PLAN.....	31
PROPOSED COUNTY GREENWAYS .....	32
PROPOSED STANARDSVILLE GREENWAYS AND PATHWAYS .....	33
INFRASTRUCTURE .....	34
ADMINISTRATION.....	34
EDUCATION .....	35
PARKS AND RECREATION.....	36
COMMUNITY SERVICES.....	36
LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES .....	37
SOLID WASTE .....	37
WASTEWATER TREATMENT .....	38
WATER .....	38
A VISION OF GREENE COUNTY FOR 2020.....	40
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS .....	44

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The State of Virginia mandates that jurisdictions have a Comprehensive Plan, reviewed nominally every five years. While the future land use map is a principal focus of Comprehensive Plans, they also provide a roadmap to guide action and decision-making that will help shape the land use, economy, physical features and quality of life in the community for years to come.

The material for the Greene County Comprehensive Plan was developed by a citizens committee that formed seven task forces to look in detail at key areas of the County. The focus of this work was to address the needs of the County 5 to 20 years into the future. Significant analysis, interviews with experts and extensive input from the public were obtained to help illuminate the state of the County and to develop ideas and recommendations that would address the concerns. This work is fully documented in Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Greene County**

Greene County is a small, rural county in the Piedmont region of Central Virginia. Formed in 1838 from Orange County, it is named for Revolutionary War General Nathaniel Greene with the county seat the town of Stanardsville. For a more thorough discussion of the history of the County see Volume II.

Blessed with the scenic beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west, Greene has no navigable waterways, railroads or interstate highways. These attributes protected the rural character of the County until more modern times. Growth pressures from the north, Charlottesville and Albemarle County have resulted in Greene County being one of the fastest growing areas in the State. Demands for services are outstripping the County's ability pay for the services through offsetting business, state or federal income resulting in rising taxes for citizens. Land values are escalating and farmland is in decline. These and other circumstances raise important issues for the future of the County and the need for action in seven principal areas: Future Land Use, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Tourism, Agriculture, Transportation and Infrastructure. All of these areas have interrelationship with each other and what affects one area can have a significant impact on the others.

### **Need for Action**

#### **Future Land Use**

Greene County is among the fastest growing jurisdictions in the state, having doubled in population since 1981. Rural Lands (principally agricultural, horticultural, forest, and open space lands that qualify for "land use" taxes) are being converted to home sites. Between 1987 and 1997, 5,600 acres of agricultural land was taken out of production. Current zoning ordinances provide

little means for the County to preserve rural properties or to direct growth to well-defined areas where services can be most efficiently provided.

Current zoning densities allow a theoretical maximum increase in the number of homes and population on rural lands of over 1,400% at full build-out (see Build-out report in Volume II). The build-out shows that current densities allow the suburbanization of Greene County, with little means for the county to preserve rural properties or direct growth to well defined areas where services can be most efficiently provided. In the next decade the increase in homes on rural land is likely to be between 170% and 250%, depending on actual population growth rates and effectiveness of county regulation in channeling that growth.

Absent change in the handling of growth, the higher, growth-related costs of education, public safety and other infrastructure could increase the average annual individual tax burden substantially over the next ten years.

### Economic Development

Greene County has a small economic base. Greene's residential taxes pay for only 15% of the cost of providing county services. Business taxes pay 16%. With Federal and State revenue unlikely to increase, one of the major ways to keep residential tax increases low is to build a stronger economic base. The Economic Development Task Force Report in Volume II provides a detailed review and analysis of the economic picture of the County.

Economic development needs to achieve several important objectives, including:

- Generating essential tax revenue to help pay for rising service costs.
- Allowing residents to work in interesting jobs that are closer to home, thus reducing traffic congestion by workers traveling out of the County,
- Making shopping more convenient, and creating more County recreational activities and food establishments, and entertainment,
- Creating tourist facilities to draw tourist dollars to the County.

A good economic development plan must follow a systematic, professional and coordinated approach that draws on all available resources - institutional, natural, people and financial. Such a plan should target specific business segments, and be reinforced with a marketing program that demonstrates an understanding of their unique needs and how Greene will help them be successful. In this context, Greene needs to carefully assess business development that might pollute our natural resources, consume productive farmland, risk our security, require substantial capital investment by the County, increase traffic congestion or seriously deplete our water supply. As a county, we must encourage economic development; but as a community, we must ensure that the economic development supports our objectives and preserves our values.

The County has taken an important step in hiring a part-time Director of Economic Development under the Economic Development Authority (EDA). In concert with the County's Planning Department, they form the primary team that must work in concert toward achieving the economic goals of the County. Likewise citizens, the EDA and County officials and organizations must work together to provide a consistent message and real deliverables to prospective businesses.

The Future Land Use Map identifies where commercial and tourist development is focused in town and village centers. These centers are where appropriate services and new residential development should be dedicated to support the business needs and markets envisioned for those areas.

Without well-balanced economic growth, the County could continue to face a large annual revenue gap.

### Natural Resources

As a rural and mountainous area, Greene County is blessed with an abundance of natural resources. Scenic mountain/farm views, forests, open space and fields, clean water and air, wildlife, bio-diversity and a rural night sky are natural treasures available to the citizens of Greene. Their value is often not recognized until overwhelmed by growth or by allowing development that adversely impacts one or more elements.

Greene has been fortunate in that its existing industry is largely non-polluting. Some development activities carry risks of polluting the natural water sources. Growth also can detract from natural elements that are important to the rural life style and to nature/agricultural tourism. The recent drought showed just how vulnerable the well and central/public water supply can be. In developing future policies and ordinances, the protection of the natural resources of the County needs to be given strong consideration. In many ways, the health of the County's natural resources will determine the health of its citizen's.

### Tourism

Tourism is a potentially significant industry in Greene because of the County's scenic beauty, wildlife and many rural offerings such as farmland, pastures with horses and cattle, historical features, hunting, fishing, hiking, equine activities, biking, and birding. These, along with a budding artist community, the annual County Fair and the Strawberry Festival are just a few examples of the existing resources for County tourism. Tourism should be viewed as a separate component of economic development, with special focus, but with high potential for new tax revenues that can contribute significantly to balancing the budget.

The County has not yet developed a major tourist industry. According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC), central Virginia's estimated traveler

spending for the year 2000 was \$2.4 billion dollars or 18.3% of the State's total of \$13.1 billion. However, only \$10.2 million of that total was spent in Greene County, the lowest in the region and less than a tenth of Nelson County who, like Greene, has direct access to the Shenandoah Park and its 15 million annual visitors. The Tourism Task Force report in Volume II noted that the 2002 local lodging and food service excise taxes are estimated to be about \$370,000. With a minimal amount of promotional effort they estimated that number could be doubled by 2007. See the Tourism Task Force Report in Volume II for detail.

Under the auspices of the EDA, the County needs a well-developed plan for furthering the tourism industry. The plan must determine what needs to be done, how it is to be accomplished and identify the resources required to achieve the goals. A first priority is the establishment of a Visitor Welcome Center. The plan needs to be well coordinated with existing tourist related businesses and county organizations so that the effort has the best chance of success. It must also draw on the substantial volunteer resources that are willing to help enhance tourism activities in the County.

### Agriculture

Greene County has a long farming heritage and a core of generational family farmers. As discussed in the Agriculture Task Force report in Volume II, the total estimated value of farm production in Greene County today is estimated to be a significant \$4,730,000. Cattle and hay farming remain the most significant activity, with dairy, nursery and niche farming playing notable roles.

Traditional farms and farmland are on the decline. Due to increasing land values and an aging farm ownership, the pure farmer is being increasingly replaced by landowners who engage in farming while not being dependent on income from farming alone. This means that farming and farming support activities can remain a major component in the County though the complexion of its operation is changing.

The County has recognized the value of farming by having a strong "land use" taxation program, continuing to support the "Right to Farm" Law and establishing Agricultural and Forestal (A&F) Districts that help keep farmland and forests from development for the term of the District. While these measures need to continue, more can be done to enhance a continuing strong agricultural industry in Greene. Incentives for landowners to join an A&F District should be considered given the rural value and significant service cost avoidance these Districts give the County. Measures for controlling and directing residential growth, land conservation and protecting natural resources, discussed separately, will greatly benefit continuance of farming. The County also needs to support resumption of full time Extension office manning, when possible, and include farming as a component of both economic development and tourism.

### Transportation

As a rural county with the majority of its work force leaving and returning every workday the transportation needs of the County largely focus on roads. The county sits astride two important U.S. routes, Route 29, which runs north/south and Route 33, which runs East/West. The intersection of the two roads is a regional hub that provides access to interstates in neighboring counties. Route 29 south of Ruckersville is the primary and principle transportation corridor to Charlottesville and Albemarle County used by commuters for employment and shopping. Route 29 north of Ruckersville provides convenient access to destinations in Northern Virginia such as Dulles Airport. Route 33 in the western half of Greene County runs through the Shenandoah National Park and provides access to the Park's Skyline Drive at the Swift Run Gap entrance.

The primary commercial growth area for Greene County is Ruckersville, due mainly to the fact that Routes 29 and 33 run through the area. As it encompasses the most heavily traveled highways in the County and will be the largest town center, this area will be of greatest concern for traffic congestion. To help relieve the congestion, provide for easier local traffic flow and hopefully avoid the need for a by-pass, alternative travel options are proposed around the 29/33 hub. The Future Land Use Map outlines the concept. The existing Route 33 between Stanardsville and Ruckersville has a paved shoulder on most of the southern side which makes it ideal for development of a bike path between the two centers that would provide a biking trail for transportation and recreational uses. The town center of Quince has a primary road running through it with a small amount of spot development and a somewhat hazardous intersection of Routes 33 and 633. Any new road network in the Quince area should seek to eliminate existing hazards and permit the smooth flow of traffic along Route 33

Stanardsville has a well-defined center and established network of roads and sidewalks. Its primary transportation needs are to enhance pedestrian and vehicular safety, improve the parking situation, fix deteriorating sidewalks and assure that if any new roads are built, they are lined with new sidewalks.

As in other areas, controlling and focusing growth can have the biggest impact on lessening transportation concerns in the rural areas. Most of Greene's paved and unpaved secondary roads are not adequate for heavier vehicle loads. Even now, safety improvements on these narrow and curving roads are called for if funding can be made available.

Pedestrian and bicycle pathways also hold potential as means for both recreational and transportation outlets for the county. Consideration of possible pathways and ordinance requirements for future developments is needed to create the necessary connectivity. Other transportation areas to consider are finding ways to reduce the number of vehicles making commuter trips. For example, the county could promote carpooling by working with developers to piggyback commuter lots on commercial lots. These same lots could also be

potential future nodes for mass transportation such as bus service between Greene and Charlottesville. To improve safety and to promote tourists gaining easier access to the County, the widening of the remaining two-lane portion of Route 33 in the west needs to be elevated in priority.

## Infrastructure

In order to support economic development and efficiently accommodate residential growth, the County must undertake the construction of a sewage treatment plant to serve the growth area in Ruckersville, without which, economic development will be slow, at best. The recent drought highlighted not only our dependence upon groundwater and the Rapidan River but also the finite nature of those sources. Clearly, the County must undertake the identification and construction of alternative sources/supplies of water. New residential growth should largely occur in or near town centers in lieu of widespread residential development in rural areas.

While Greene County schools have achieved full accreditation, the facilities are inadequate for the school population.

These capital requirements combined with the increasing cost of emergency services, law enforcement and social services related to population growth require that fiscal planning policies must be adapted to address these new financial pressures.

The most critical need in delivering infrastructure, at present, is the preparation of a long range capital needs assessment which will form the basis for a Five Year Capital Improvements Plan. Only after capital expenditure needs have been identified, prioritized and financing options addressed, can a budget which addresses the needs of the citizens without undue burden on taxpayers be developed.

## The Way Ahead

Having identified the need for action, Part II sets forth goals and objectives, and provides more specific recommendations, for each of the seven principal areas. These, taken in concert, should help achieve a vision for the County in 2020 that is included in Part III.

The Board of Supervisors, the Planning Commission and the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee wish to thank the many people and organizations that have contributed to this Plan. They are identified in Part IV. It is only through such efforts that Greene will continue to grow, and to maintain the many wonderful qualities that make it a good place to live, to work and to visit.

## LAND USE

### Introduction

Land use policies affect virtually all elements of the Comprehensive Plan and, as such, provide the basis for the future of Greene County. These policies should allow the County to accommodate growth by directing it to areas with adequate infrastructure while protecting the rural character of the County and its farms, open space, natural resources and historic heritage.

### Need For Action

Greene County is among the fastest growing jurisdictions in the state, having doubled in population since 1981. Between 1987 and 1997, thousands of acres of agricultural land was taken out of production, much of it converted to home sites. Current zoning ordinances provide little means for the County to preserve rural properties or to direct growth to well-defined areas where services can be most efficiently provided.

High rates of conventional residential growth create service demands that require revenue not provided by property taxes on the new residences.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Direct business and residential development toward designated areas with available and dedicated services.
2. Review and revise zoning ordinances in order to provide better tools for use by the County in planning and managing growth, both in land use and to offset services costs through the use of proffers.
3. Encourage the protection of scenic, natural and historic resources, farmlands and open space.
4. Encourage voluntary land conservation.

### Key Issues and Recommendations

**Key Issue A-1: Future Land Use Map.** The revised Future Land Use Map provides an image of how the County plans to manage growth. (see page 13). The map identifies areas of designated growth in Town and Village Centers for commercial, industrial and residential development. They are, with the exception of Dyke, the areas where central/public water and sewer service will be available and where building densities will be most flexible. The map locates future roadway requirements to support the growth in Ruckersville, the primary growth area.

### Recommendations:



A-1a. Refer to the Future Land Use Map on land use decisions.

A-1b. Limit central/public water and sewer to growth areas designated as town centers.

A-1c. Establish mixed-use zoning for growth areas.

A-1d. Discourage commercial/industrial spot zoning.

A-1e. Monitor non-conforming use compliance and remove when possible.

**Key Issue A-2: Rural Residential Zoning.** Creation of the new zoning designation, Rural Residential would result in an alternative to current piecemeal development patterns in A-1 zones. This new zone would give the County the tools to manage residential development in rural areas, accept proffers to offset service costs and achieve cluster development that is more in keeping with the rural character of Greene County.

Recommendations:

A-2a. Create a category of Rural Residential zoning (RR-1), which includes the same provisions by right and with special use permit as the current A-1 zone.

A-2b. Provide for cluster development in the Rural Residential zone, with consideration given to smaller lot sizes and a density bonus in return for maintenance of permanent open space for wildlife, recreational or agricultural use.

A-2c. Explore the development of proffer guidelines.

**Key Issue A-3: Agricultural and Conservation Zone Revisions.** In conjunction with the adoption of a Rural Residential Zone, revise A-1 and C-1 zoning ordinances to preserve the benefits of those designations, promote retention of rural open space and reduce suburban development densities currently allowed by right in A-1.

Recommendations:

A-3a. By utilizing such tools as time-oriented division and/or adjustment of division rights, revise the County's Zoning and Subdivision Ordinances to minimize multi-lot subdivision in rural areas.

A-3b. Maintain Family Divisions and Single Lot Exemptions.

A-3c. Continue Land Use tax benefits.

**Key Issue A-4: Measures to Protect Natural Resources and Rural Character.**

Recommendations:

A-4a. Consider widening setbacks and encourage tree buffers for new residential developments as a part of the staff approval process.

A-4b. Limit future multi-residence development to only one access from any adjacent primary or secondary Road.

**Key Issue A-5: Voluntary Conservation Programs.** Voluntary programs that preserve open space, forests and natural resources should be encouraged.

Recommendations:

A-5a. Support greater participation in Agriculture and Forestal Districts.

A-5b. Encourage participation in Land Conservation Programs and the voluntary donation of Conservation Easements.

**Key Issue A-6: State Funded/Authorized Land Use Programs.** Support State policies and programs that will provide additional tools to manage residential growth.

Recommendations:

A-6a. Support legislative authorization to impose impact fees.

A-6b. Support legislative authorization for the Transfer of Development Rights.

A-6c. Encourage State funding for land conservation, including funds for a Purchase of Development Rights program.

## 11



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### Introduction

Greene's many fine businesses contribute to our community, create jobs and help finance the cost of providing essential services. However, supporting additional growth in economic development is a priority. Greene County is a business-friendly community that seeks to grow its business base in a way that benefits the County and its residents and restores the balance between commercial and residential growth.

### Need For Action

Increased growth in economic development to generate greater tax revenue is critical to Greene's future. In addition, good economic development adds to the quality of life for Greene's residents in many other ways. Bringing new and attractive businesses to Greene will require consistent professional effort, County flexibility and the support of residents.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Generate sufficient tax revenue through targeted economic development to relieve the pressure on the County's budget and property taxes.
2. Expanded infrastructure in targeted areas of commercial development
3. Continued support of Economic Development Authority activities
4. Enhanced image of Greene County as a business-friendly location
5. Balance the need for increased economic development with controlled residential development and proffer acceptance

### Key Issues and Recommendations

**Key Issue B-1: Planning.** Preparation for growth in economic development requires that a plan be prepared to determine the extent of the need for business-related revenue and a strategy for achieving it.

#### Recommendations:

B-1a. Prepare a 10-year economic analysis and forecast based upon population growth, anticipated capital investment, budget priorities and State, Federal and local revenue expectations.

B-1b. Create a County-wide plan, emphasizing the Ruckersville area, that addresses traffic and access, road construction, and infrastructure.

B-1c. Develop a strategic plan for expansion of Greene's economic base including analysis of competitive strengths, realistic objectives, responsibilities and time lines as well as funding requirements.

**Key Issue B-2: Prospects.** Economic development efforts should be focused upon not only those businesses which satisfy revenue objectives but which contribute to quality of life in Greene and build upon the existing strengths of the County.

Recommendations:

B-2a. Screen target business segments against overall attractiveness and fit with Greene County strengths to identify focus for marketing efforts.

B-2b. Research identified target segments to determine specific areas of competitive advantage in Greene County versus other locations.

B-2c. Explore opportunities in the State and Federal government related to the stated intention of locating new construction 100 miles or more from Washington, D.C.

B-2d. Meet with existing local business regularly to discuss growth opportunities and assure their needs are being met.

B-2e. Consider targeting "active adult retirement" communities as a vehicle to increasing potential consumers in the County while minimizing incremental infrastructure costs, e.g. schools.

**Key Issue B-3: Products.** Prepare for economic development by identifying appropriate locations for business and commercial enterprises.

Recommendations:

B-3a. Create and maintain an inventory of sites, either identified or owned, that are available for business development.

B-3b. Coordinate with utility and other service providers to ensure that their plans support the needs of Greene County's economic development plans.

B-3c. Prepare information packages for prospective businesses containing all the information required to locate in Greene County, e.g. planning and zoning process, infrastructure, workforce availability, etc.

**Key Issue B-4: Processes.** Establishment of a systematic, economic development process is an important element of focus on business growth; it is also important to be flexible for exceptionally attractive opportunities.

Recommendations:

B-4a. Develop, fund and implement a comprehensive marketing program including positioning for distinct business segments, brochures, information packets, advertising programs and selected visits to companies in target segments.

B-4b. Clarify roles and responsibilities between the Planning Director and the EDA Director to ensure that inquiries are handled efficiently and effectively.

B-4c. Prepare a “rapid response” capability to assure that an unexpected caller receives a positive first impression of Greene County.

B-4d. Create appropriate guidelines for accommodating the interest of attractive, low impact, high technology companies that wish to locate outside the designated growth area.

**Key Issue B-5: Partnerships.** Encourage public/private partnerships to promote economic development.

Recommendations:

B-5a. Seek private partnerships, including developers and landowners, for the creation of a substantial industrial park.

B-5b. Private partners may also be sought for a County entertainment pavilion, visitor center or, if possible, the construction of a water impoundment.

B-5c. Identify sources of economic development grants and apply for the most appropriate.

**Key Issue B-6: People.** Engage this most critically important resource within the County.

Recommendations:

B-6a. Communicate the plans, needs and accomplishments of the County in economic development to the residents of Greene County.

B-6b. Utilize the professional experience and expertise of County residents, as volunteers, to support Greene’s ongoing economic development activity.

B-6c. Staff the EDA consistent with the economic benefit it brings to the County.

**Key Issue B-7: Performance.** Regular reporting will assure that economic development activities are on track and alert to corrective action as indicated.

B-7a. Prepare and distribute an annual report of economic development accomplishments.

B-7b. Prepare and publish an annual analysis, by industry segment (e.g. tourism, retail, etc.) showing the positive impact of economic development on County revenues.

B-7c. Include a comparison of accomplishments versus goals and recommendations as part of the next Comprehensive Plan revision.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

### Introduction

Natural resources and their systems are keystone to the quality of our existence. Clean air, clean and abundant water, agriculture, forestry, wildlife and habitat, and open space are irreplaceable assets. Their health represents our health, as well as that of future generations.

### Need for Action

Rapid and random development poses the greatest threat to Greene County's natural resources. New approaches need to be evaluated and implemented to obtain the benefits of growth without endangering our natural resources.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Create governmental and public awareness of the importance of preserving natural resources while accommodating residential growth.
2. Enact measures to protect Greene County's irreplaceable natural resources and become a model county for natural resource stewardship.

### Key Issues and Recommendations

#### **Key Issue C-1: Mountain Resources and Critical Slopes Protection.**

Greene County's mountainous regions are a crucial part of the County's natural resources. They provide for ground water generation and protection, plant and animal habitat and contribute to healthy air quality. Additionally, they play an important role in our economy through land and forest resources, scenic views and tourism. Unsound development practices in these areas could result in a variety of long term problems such as runoff contaminants in the rivers and streams, erosion of fragile soils, air, light and noise pollution and others.

#### Recommendations:

C-1a. Publish an educational brochure to promote environmental awareness and encourage responsible site design in mountainous regions of the County.

C-1b. Encourage builders, land owners, and homeowner associations to adopt general standards of conservation and slope protection when building on or near a mountain resource. Discourage clearing and grading on critical slopes which results in erosion, landslides, increased storm water runoff, silt and sedimentation in surface water.

**Key Issue C-2: Water Quality and Quantity.** Greene County contains headwaters for two major watersheds, the Rivanna to the south and the Rapidan



to the north. Currently, the County lacks any programs that directly address watershed conservation or protection. Stream testing in Greene County, while limited to date, has identified three principal concerns; sedimentation, turbidity and high levels of fecal coliform; the last has placed Swift Run on the DEQ Impaired Waterways list. In addition, there are no major groundwater aquifers in the County due to the bedrock geology of the area. Increasing residential growth with wells as the only water source is drawing on a supply of groundwater that has never been measured and, therefore, capacity is unknown.

Recommendations:

C2-a. Encourage establishment of watershed design standards to include minimizing the creation of impervious surfaces that increase run off problems and reduce the land's ability to recharge the underground reserve. Other considerations could be vegetative open channels to convey and treat run off and bio-retention areas for storm water treatment.

C2-b. Develop a volunteer water monitoring program utilizing free training from the Isaac Walton League 'Save our Streams' to track, record and report on the health of major waterways in Greene.

C2-c. Provide education on water matters through class sections on conservation as well as enlisting students for volunteer stream monitoring and to homeowners on conservation and environmentally friendly pest control and fertilization methods.

**Key Issue C-3: Air Quality.** At present, air quality in Greene County is good, aided by extensive forested and agricultural land as well as "clean" industry. As the County grows, air quality could be put at risk by increasing automobile traffic and the nature of business and industry attracted by the larger population base.

Recommendations:

C-3a. Encourage industrial, commercial and residential developers to adopt environmentally friendly building practices including the use of EPA approved ENERGY STAR products.

C-3b. Enlist volunteer Air Monitors to track air pollution levels.

C-3c. Promote efforts to reduce traffic including public transportation, park and ride lots and car pooling as well as encouraging commercial and residential developers to include pedestrian and bicycle lanes in all site plans.

## **TOURISM**

### Introduction

In the last decade, many rural Virginia communities have been successful in developing tourism as an avenue to new jobs and much needed additional revenue. In order for Greene County to take advantage of its many existing natural, historic and cultural resources, to capture the related economic benefits and to make the County a viable tourist destination, we must view tourism as a business that requires planning, coordination and leadership.

### Need For Action

Greene County has many resources that could be developed into a strong base of attractions and activities to entice a large number of tourists. The combination of rural character, spectacular views and scenery, one of only four entrances to Shenandoah National Park and a direct gateway to the Skyline Drive and Appalachian Trail provide an enviable tourism draw. A growing number of Bed and Breakfast establishments, numerous historic buildings, antique stores and the Strawberry Festival enhance the opportunity. In developing a productive tourism, Greene has the opportunity to form local and regional partnerships with businesses, community groups and government agencies that will strengthen its ability to balance tourism growth with the resident cooperation.

Despite the existence of these tourism assets, Greene County has seen little financial benefit. In the last decade, much of the residential development has occurred on rural lands, our most valuable asset. In addition, historic buildings are in need of restoration, Stanardsville streets and sidewalks are in need of repair, and the Greene County Historical Society Museum is closed. Also, our County lacks up to date "interpretive materials" for distribution to tourists, such as brochures, maps, and information sheets for scenic roads, hiking, biking, etc. Greene would benefit greatly if there were a thriving Chamber of Commerce or by the creation of another organization to provide leadership and coordination. Based upon estimates from the Virginia Tourism Corporation, by developing and implementing an aggressive and comprehensive tourism plan, the County could potentially realize more than one million dollars revenues from lodging and food taxes alone, with total local travel-related revenues exceeding two million dollars by 2010.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Establish and fund an organizational structure to plan, implement and coordinate tourism activities.
2. Generate new tax revenue as well as increased business and employment opportunities related to tourism.
3. Preserve important scenic, historic and cultural assets.

## Key Issues and Recommendations

**Key Issue D-1. Structure and Support.** If tourism is to be a significant part of Greene County's economy, there must be a structured and funded approach, though initial funding may be limited.

### Recommendations:

D-1a. Form a Tourism Council, initially all-volunteer and under the auspices of the EDA, which would provide office space, funding flow-through, administrative support and coordination with the tourism efforts of the EDA.

D-1b. Consider hiring a full-time tourism coordinator following demonstrated success in tourism activities as reflected in an increase in local lodging and food service excise taxes.

**Key Issue D-2. Needed Components.** The need for the basic components of a Greene County tourism industry should be addressed immediately. (Draft maps follow.)

D2-a. Develop a tourism resource inventory, which identifies all tourism assets, organizations and markets.

D-2b. Prepare a tourism infrastructure plan, which would identify and prioritize the needs of tourists and the improvements that would most enhance the County's tourism posture. Virginia's Tourism Accreditation Program provides assistance to localities in this effort.

D2-c. Establish a welcome center as the key component of communication with tourists.

D-2d. Improve or update existing interpretative materials (brochures, maps, and information sheets for scenic roads, hiking, biking, etc) and develop new ones for use by tourists.

D2-e. Prepare a registry of Bed and Breakfast establishments and "hospitality homes" and develop a system for centrally managing reservations where needed.

D2-f. Identify Tourism Partnerships. Partnerships with local businesses and state and federal agency's offer an opportunity to accomplish our Tourism goals sooner and more efficiently, for example, the Virginia Tourism Council offers training, marketing cooperatives and statistical analysis at little or no charge.

**Key Issue D-3. Preservation of Existing and Creation of New Tourism**

**Assets.** Encourage and plan for the preservation of historic, natural and cultural tourism resources. At the same time, aggressively seek new tourism opportunities either in the form of new businesses or through a new look at an existing asset, e.g. eco-tourism or agri-tourism.

D3-a. Support the establishment of Stanardsville as a Historic District, utilizing funds for sidewalk repair, underground utilities, landscaping, guard rails and historic buildings improvements.

D3-b. Consider increased set-backs and/or tree buffers for new lots.

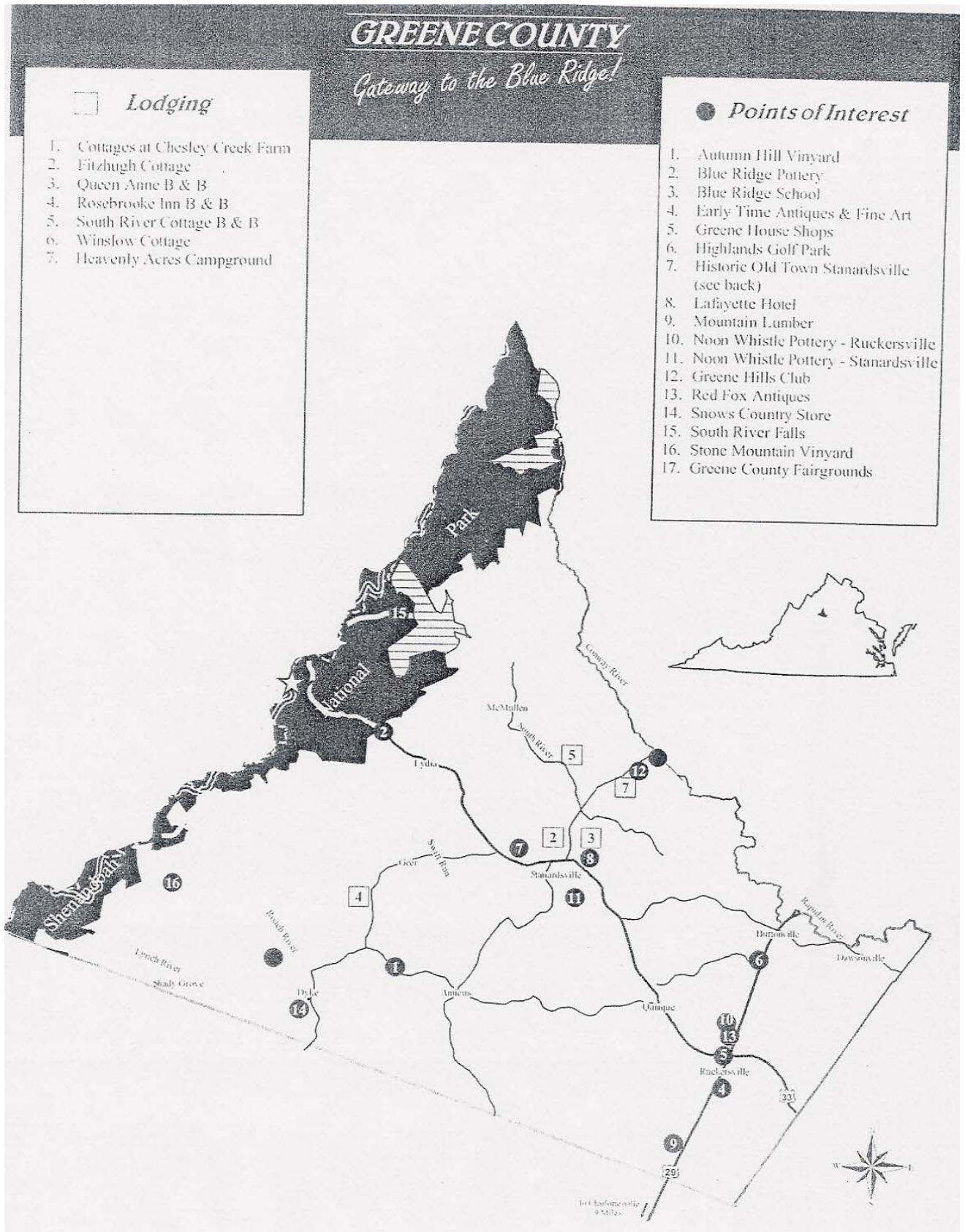
D3-c. Support development of facilities, which would improve tourism, including but not limited to bed and breakfasts, hotels, lodges, entertainment/recreation facilities, and restaurants as well as expansion to critical mass of antique stores.

D3-d. Explore opportunities in agri-tourism, eco-tourism and niche farming as a vehicle to increased tourism as well as a business opportunity for local landowners.

D3-e. Support voluntary efforts to clean up all County roads and to educate the public about litter prevention.

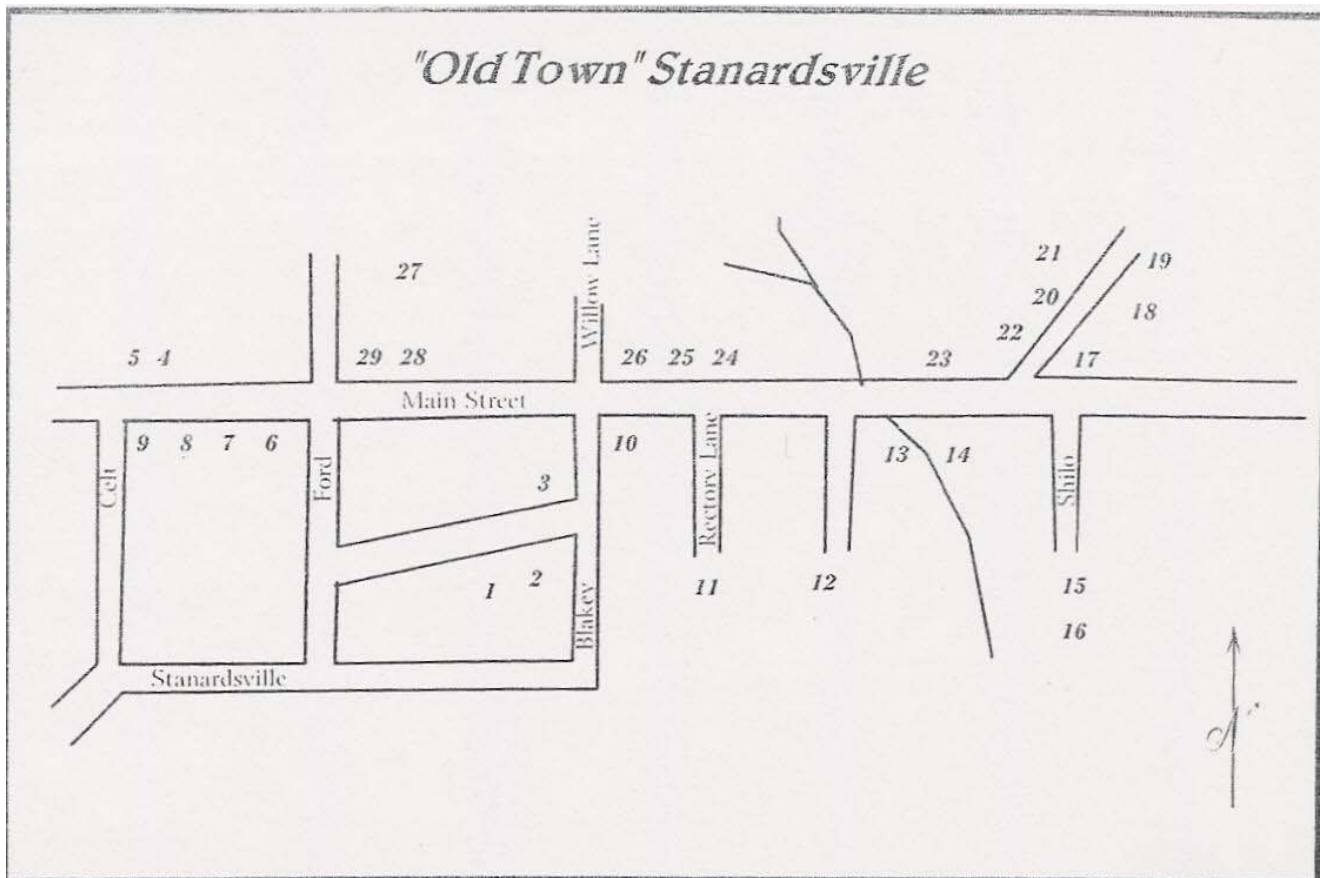
D3-f. Limit the scenic impact of communications towers by locating them outside scenic viewsheds and encouraging multi-functional use.

# TOURISM MAP DRAFT (FRONT SIDE)





## TOURISM MAP DRAFT (BACK SIDE)



(1) The Greene County Court House, built in 1838. This is a fine example of the Greek Revival Court Houses for which Virginia is famous. (2) The old County Jail, built in 1838. This building compliments the Court House and was once part of a pair of flanking buildings. It now houses the County Historical Museum.

(3) Stanardsville Methodist Church, built in 1858. Here townspeople nursed soldiers during the Civil War. The gallery, which still exists was used by slaves who drove their masters to church. (4) The Davis-Deane House built in 1855, an elegant town house, the lower floor of which was used for doctors' offices. (5) Just beyond is the Grover Morris House, built in 1851 by Thomas H. Gibbons and owned by his granddaughter, Mrs. Grover Morris, until recent years.

(6) The Gibbons Market built in 1861. It is a fine example of commercial Greek Revival architecture still in use. The Ollie Morris house (9) beyond is well over 100 years old. (10) The Lafayette Hotel, built in 1840. This was an elegant hotel which has also been used as a bar, lawyers' office and even a buggy and harness shop in later years. The brick building just beyond is said to have been slave quarters. Continuing to Rector Lane, You will see the Episcopal Rectory. This lovely house, built about 1890, is said to be haunted by the wife of an early minister. Next to the Rectory is the Evergreen Country House. This was built by William Mills, a local jurist, who bought the land about 1840 and was active in the area. Back to Main Street the Victorian home (13) and former office of Dr. Henson was built by Lewis Pendleton, Sr. sometime between 1904 and 1910. Just across the Blue Run creek is the log-bodied Mitchell house built early in the 19th century. It is one of the town's oldest houses. Out towards the town limits is Shiloh Street. At the end of this short street is the Shiloh Baptist Church. The original church was built in 1862; the present structure dates from 1907. Back of the church are two other buildings, the smaller is a former black high school (6th, 7th and 8th grades). The larger an elementary school also known as the Odd Fellows Building. Between these two buildings, enclosed by a simple fence and decorated by four boxwoods, is a simple marker, "Unknown Dead of Ewell's Army". As you return to Main Street turn west. On your immediate right you will see the Shelton-Melone house. Part of this house was built before 1855. The first house (18), now belonging to Mrs. Marc Hought, was built by William Sorrell about 1845. The third house on the right is the Bickers-Corner house, built in 1858. Just up the hill and across the road is the Jurell house (20), a large Victorian house built about 1900. Visible just behind it is a smaller building (21) built as Forest Hill Academy, important as an early private school. Returning to Main Street, you will pass the Stanardsville Baptist Church, one of three churches in the town having an almost identical appearance. Turn west again on Main Street. The first house on your right will be the Rosa Taylor house, built in 1815 by John Sorrell, with the main front room as a store. He also acted as home secretary to President Madison. His sister Nancy Atkins came into possession of the house in 1852. She was briefly the toll house keeper on the Rockingham Toll Road. Up the hill a short distance is a Victorian house (24), built in 1897 and owned for some years by C.G. Miller, a local funeral director. The next house (25) was built in 1848 by Robert Pritchett an early County Clerk. The front is undoubtedly a later addition. Across from the Lafayette Hotel is the Eddins-Davis house. A Queen Anne Victorian style house built in 1900. This house was once a boarding house where many teachers lived. Now look across the parking lot to see the Moyer's house. This beautiful old house built in 1917, stands on the home site of William Stanard for whom the town of Stanardsville is named. Immediately ahead is a red brick building (28), the first hot air furnace in the area was installed - rather unsuccessfully; and it was here in the local pharmacy at the time that people came to hear the area's first radio. On the corner is (29) Grace Episcopal Church, another provincial Gothic church built in 1901.

## **AGRICULTURE**

### Introduction

Greene County has a long farming tradition and a core number of generational family farmers. The farms dominate much of the area and give it its rural and scenic character. Farming is a major economic element in the County with a total estimated annual value of \$4,730,000. The major component of farming is cattle and the companion activity of hay production. Dairy farming remains a viable activity. Specialty (or niche) farming has increased in nursery and greenhouse crop production and vineyards, berries and herbs. The equine element is also on the increase with a wide variety of activities including several internationally renowned horse trainers and competitors having established farms in the county.

### Need for Action

Traditional farms and farmland are on the decline due to development, increasing land values and an aging farm ownership. Due to economics, the pure farmer is being increasingly replaced by landowners who engage in farming while not dependent on income from farming alone. This means that farming and farming support activities can remain a major component in the County though the complexion of its operation is changing.

The County has recognized the value of farming by having a strong “land use” taxation program, supporting the “Right to Farm” Act and establishing Agricultural and Forestal (A&F) Districts that help keep farmland and forests from development for the term of the District. For land zoned Agriculture (A-1), low-intensity, general and high-intensity farming are all permitted, by right. While these measures need to continue, more can be done to enhance a continuing strong agricultural industry in Greene. Incentives for landowners to join an A&F District should be considered given the rural value and significant service cost avoidance these Districts give the County. Measures for controlling and directing residential growth, land conservation and protecting natural resources, discussed separately, will greatly benefit continuance of farming.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Arrest decline in number of farms and in farmland
2. Attract and retain young farmers
3. Increase specialty and niche farming, such as equestrian, vineyard, nursery, and greenhouse crop activities
4. Achieve recognition of farming and farmers as vital part of County future and make them part of tourism.

### Key Issues and Recommendations

**Key Issue E-1: Decline in Farms and Farmland.** The number of farms and amount of land in farm use has continuously decreased from 1982 to 1997. The rate of decrease in number of farms slowed between from 1992 to 1997 but the rate of decrease of amount of farmland quickened. This trend coupled with the fact that there are significantly fewer young farmers below the age of 45 pose the risk of more farms ceasing operation. Financial pressures, and the fact that most farmers view their farm as a retirement resource, as well as inheritance for their heirs, also increase the risk of more farms being sold or parceled-off for non-farm use. This risk is exacerbated by the reality that the viability of traditional farming is in question without inherited land and/or access to inexpensive leased land. Land use recommendations to control growth and A&F District incentives will directly benefit preservation of farmland.

Recommendations:

E-1a. Reaffirm application of the Right to Farm Act in Greene.

E-1b. Support State funding for conservation of farmland.

**Key Issue E-2. Increasing Average Age of Farmers.** More youth need to be attracted to and retained in farming. In 1982, there were 62 farmers age 45 or younger; in 1997 there were only 33. It is now estimated that the average age of a Greene farmer is between 60 and 62 years as compared to statewide average estimate of 57 years. Without more youth, the decline of farming is inevitable. The recent influx of newcomers relocating to Greene from urban areas to retire or to telecommute and keeping farms in farm use has helped mitigated this trend of aging farmers to some extent. However, the attraction and retention of youth is essential.

Recommendations:

E-2a. Provide qualified full time County Extension Agent.

E-2b. Promote Organizations (e.g. 4-H and Young Farmers) and Programs (e.g. Agricultural Vitality Program and Farm Link Program) which assist young farmers.

**Key Issue E-3. Need for Increase in Specialty Farming.** There has been a recent increase in specialty farming in Greene County. The market value of nursery and greenhouse crops more than doubled from 1992 to 1997 and will double again from 1997 to 2002 based on estimates. The production of vineyards has increased. The market value of horse and ponies sold has increased substantially. County residents are engaged in the gamut of horse sports, including pleasure and trail riding, dressage, open jumping, horse showing, and stock horse competitions which provide tourism dollars. There is an increase in herb and berry farming and in specialty livestock. The apparent increased



interest and viability of such farming activities makes a compelling case for these activities to be promoted and encouraged.

Recommendations:

E-3a. Promote vineyards, nurseries, greenhouse crops, specialty farming and related agricultural products enterprises.

E-3b. Promote horse farms and equestrian activities.

E-3c. Consider allowing high intensity agriculture activities in the A-1 zone.

**Key Issue E-4: Recognition of Farming and Farmers as Vital to County.** It is important to encourage community recognition of farming and farmers as vital part of county heritage and future well being and to have private and community support in achieving the common goals.

Recommendations:

E-4a. Create a volunteer Agricultural Council to assist farmers and policy makers in farming matters.

E-4b. Encourage Economic Development Authority to promote agriculture.

E-4c. Promote centralizing location of farm services and support in Greene.

**Key Issue 5: Recognition of Greene as Rural and Agricultural Tourist Destination.** Greene County is blessed with a bounty of natural attractions and its mountainous, rural and agricultural character. These features should be promoted in a dedicated county effort to foster tourism. Part of this effort should be to emphasize the rural and agricultural nature of Greene, and promote Farmers' Markets, which will also help facilitate specialty farming. In turn, the specialty farming will be an added lure to tourism.

Recommendations:

E-5a. Promote Value of Agriculture and Open Land to Tourism.

E-5b. Encourage Farmers' markets.

E-5c. Use Strawberry Festival and County Fair to support farming.

**Key Issue E-6. Need for Private Incentives and Financial Help for Farmers.** Given the increased awareness and interest of the local community in protecting and preserving farms and farmland, it is essential that the county do all possible to support and encourage such citizen efforts.

Recommendations:

E-6a. Find ways to match sellers with farm-use buyers.

E-6b. Adopt incentives for farmers who protect water quality and supply.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

### Introduction

With the majority of Greene County's population working outside of the County, commuter traffic is a dominant feature of Greene County's transportation network. Most people, goods, and services enter and leave the Greene by its two highways, Route 29 and Route 33. These two highways intersect at Ruckersville, creating a strategic regional hub. Greene's rural roads are not heavily traveled and provide access to remote areas of the county.

### Need For Action

The County's primary economic development emphasis is in Ruckersville where other infrastructure is being planned simultaneously with transportation improvements. As development occurs, an alternate road network around the 29/33 intersection will be required for the smooth flow of future traffic as well as access to additional development opportunity locations.

Two primary roads run through the town of Stanardsville: Route 33 Business (Main Street) and Route 230. The Stanardsville By-pass has reduced the amount of traffic within the town but has made Route 33 attractive as a regional connector between Route 29 and Interstate 81.

Quinque is the only other growth area in the County that has a primary road running through it. Future road construction should permit the safe and smooth flow of traffic along Route 33 and open new areas for economic development and/or mixed use development.

Many of Greene's rural roads cross steep terrain, creating curves and grade changes which lead to accidents rarely related to traffic congestion. Rural roads should be steadily improved to address safety concerns such as sight distance and lack of shoulders.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Maintain smooth traffic flow through Ruckersville, Quinque and Stanardsville and provide increased access to those commercial centers through an improved transportation network as growth occurs.
2. Reduce traffic counts in the area by encouraging the use of commuter lots, carpools and mass transportation.
3. Establish networks of sidewalks or pathways, where practical, to reduce the number of motor vehicle trips.

### Key Issues and Recommendations

**KEY ISSUE F-1: Efficient Movement of People and Goods in Ruckersville.**

The dominant traffic feature in Ruckersville is north-south traffic utilizing Route 29. As growth occurs in Ruckersville, the improvement and development of the secondary road network is necessary to maintain convenient access to large areas of Ruckersville without impeding through traffic.

The Rt. 29 Access Management Plan approved in 1999 has been difficult to implement. A conceptual road network proposed in this plan is more effective and efficient in regard to local traffic and makes Route 29 more effective in handling through traffic. The new road plan reduces the need of future new traffic lights and strategically creates beneficial impacts to the crossover network along Route 29 and Route 33. Other roads may tie into the road network being proposed in this plan.

**Recommendations:**

- **F-1a.** Revise the Rt. 29 Access Management Plan to incorporate an alternative road network specific to the Ruckersville growth area.
- **F-1b.** Limit the installation of new traffic signals along Route 29 and Route 33 in Ruckersville.
- **F-1c.** As growth occurs south of the Ruckersville town center area, incorporate similar interparcel access approaches to traffic management.

**KEY ISSUE F-2: Efficient Movement of People and Goods in Quinke.** In Quinke most of the commercial and residential development is located north of Route 33. Efficient movement of traffic through Quinke maintains Stanardsville's timely access to Route 29 and Charlottesville.

**Recommendations:**

- **F-2a.** As new development occurs in Quinke, the county and state should plan for a new road network and/or parallel road that minimizes congestion on Rt. 33.
- **F-2b.** Improvements should be focused on safety at Rt. 33/633, including sight distance, curvature and grade of the intersection to minimize the need for a traffic light at that intersection.
- **F-2c.** Monitor the Route 633 South access to avoid inadequate traffic loading, for commuters to and from Twin Lakes and points south.

**KEY ISSUE F-3: Improve Transportation Network In Stanardsville.** With Stanardsville serving as the County hub for services and also as a historic town, efficient access to the town must be maintained. The scenic and mixed use

nature of the town and proximity of compatible uses suggests an improved pedestrian network would be of great value.

**Recommendations:**

- **F-3a.** Intersectional improvements are necessary at the intersection of Route 33 Business and Route 230 to facilitate turning movements during heavy traffic periods.
- **F-3b.** Improve traffic safety and accessibility on Route 33 from Shenandoah National Park to Stanardsville by straightening and widening to three or four lanes a 3.8 mile section.
- **F-3c.** Ensure adequate parking in Stanardsville through the creation of additional satellite parking lots as visitor counts rise.
- **F-3d.** Ensure safe and effective crossing of the By-pass at Route 604 (Celt Road) at the blinking traffic signal or at Route 623 (Swift Run Road) at the traffic signal.

**KEY ISSUE F-4: Improve Secondary Roads.** Improve the safety and efficiency of secondary roads by eliminating barriers to clear lines of sight, correcting congested or awkward intersections and curtailing strip residential development.

**Recommendations:**

- **F-4a.** As an addendum to the county's secondary road plan, include roads where less expensive work can be done to improve sight lines, such as clearing or cutting back foliage and removing earthen barriers.
- **F-4b.** Identify intersections along secondary roads where traffic becomes congested or hazards exist to safe travel. Improvements could be accomplished through additions to the secondary road improvement plan or finding alternative routes through new developments to be paid for by cash proffers.
- **F-4c.** Use zoning to prohibit access to secondary roads by individual homes in new subdivisions, which will allow future road widening and other improvements.
- **F-4d.** Consider deeper setbacks for private subdivisions along secondary roads to allow for future road widening and other improvements.

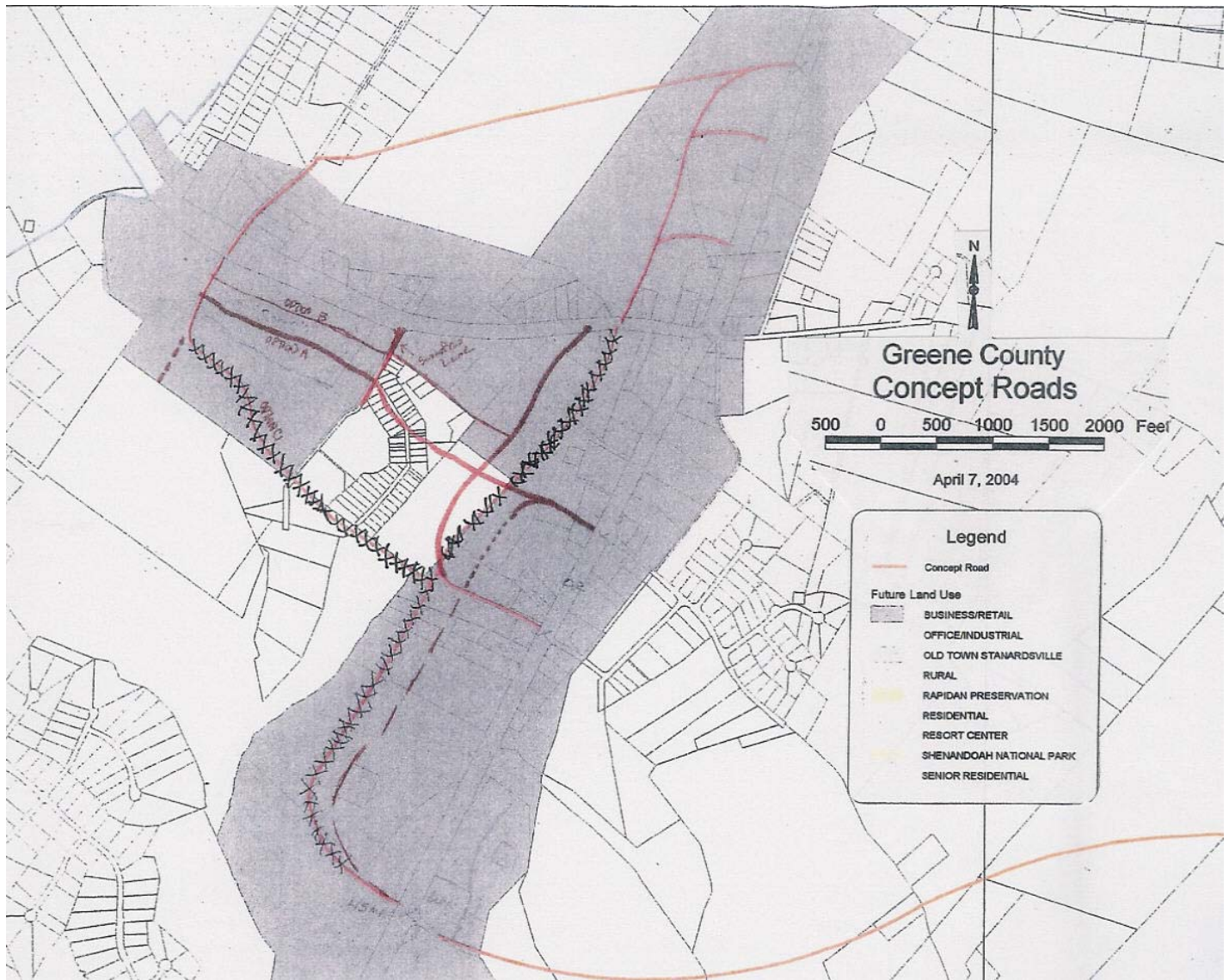
**KEY ISSUE F-5: Encourage Interconnectivity.** Integrate adjacent areas of the county with pedestrian and recreational pathways leading to larger scale integration of separate areas of Greene. By connecting new and adjacent

developments with each other and working to eventually connect existing developments, the county could create a network of pathways as an alternative to motor vehicle traffic.

**Recommendations:**

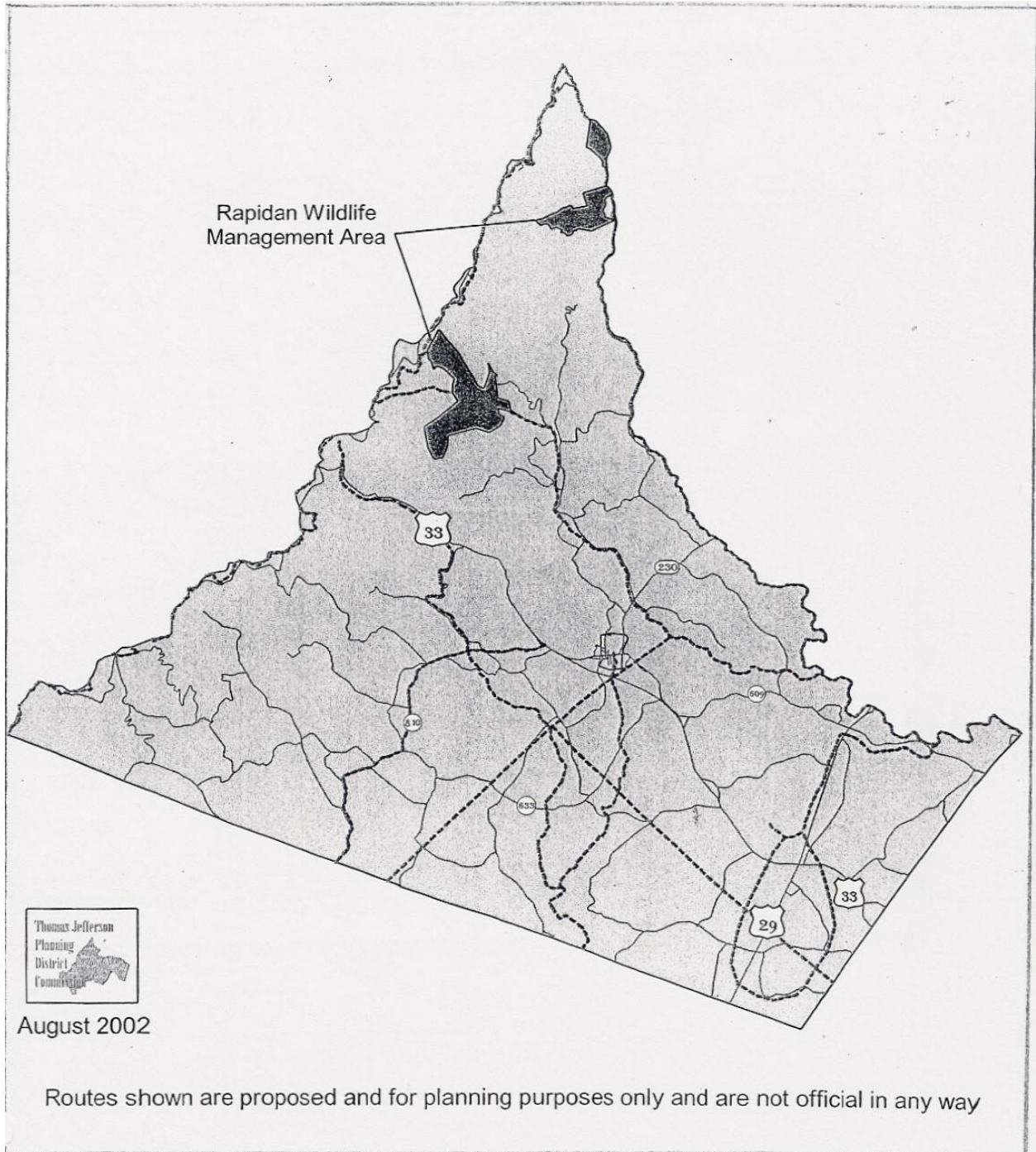
- **F-5a.** Identify existing right of ways and roads suitable for addition of pathways on setbacks, for potential inter-county linkage by alternative means of transport. These pathways could link neighborhoods, schools, recreational areas and business. Where rights-of-way are wide enough, such as on portions of Route 33, the creation of pathways may be readily implemented.
- **F-5b.** For existing businesses, identify opportunities for shared or inter-parcel access. When opportunities arise with new development or re-development, emphasis inter-parcel or other shared access.
- **F-5c.** To slow the rise of traffic counts especially on Route 29, encourage the development of commuter lots and use of mass transit.

## DRAFT – RUCKERSVILLE RING ROAD PLAN



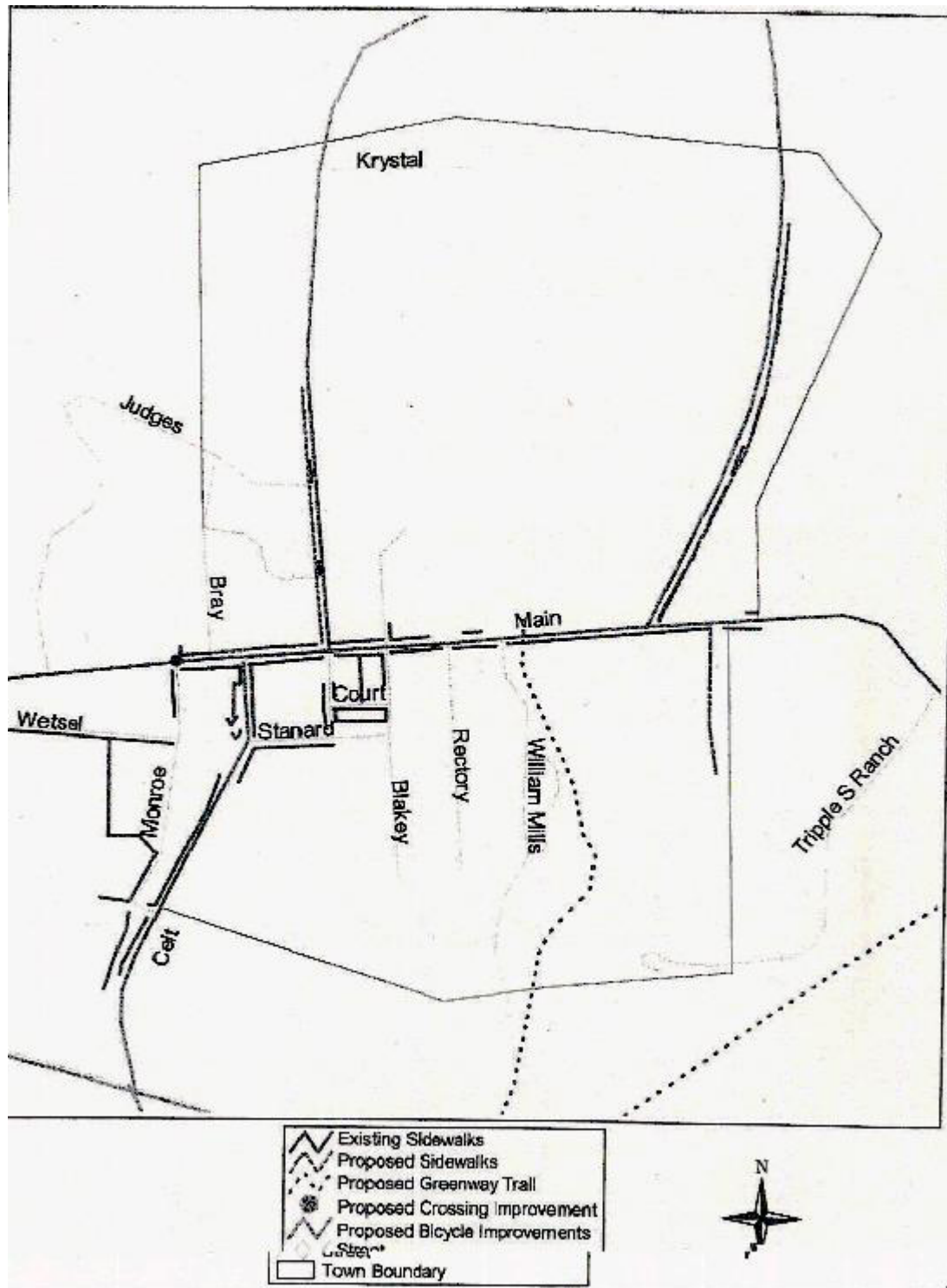


## PROPOSED COUNTY GREENWAYS





## PROPOSED STANARDSVILLE GREENWAYS AND PATHWAYS



## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### Introduction

Infrastructure planning incorporates all elements of public service; education, emergency services, public utilities, parks and recreation, as well as the administration required to deliver those services. All are supported with public funds and should be delivered as efficiently and economically as possible in order to provide essential services to the citizens of Greene County.

### Need For Action

The most critical need in delivering infrastructure, at present, is the preparation of a long range capital needs assessment which will form the basis for a five year Capital Improvement Plan. The County should immediately initiate a strategic planning process that:

- a. identifies the long range capital needs of the County,
- b. provides guidance from the Board on funding priorities, and
- c. addresses options for financing the County's capital project priorities.

Strategic and long range financial planning is the key to the provision of services while, at the same time, providing those services in a fiscally prudent manner.

### Goals and Objectives

1. Provide government services efficiently and economically
2. Implement proactive fiscal planning policies
3. Fund public education and public safety to meet community needs and objectives
4. Provide employee compensation and benefits competitive with surrounding counties
5. Provide fiscal stability through an appropriately funded General Fund Balance
6. Maintain the County's personal and real property tax rates in accordance with the County's revenue needs
7. Provide necessary capital infrastructure improvements to support commercial and residential growth in the designated growth area

### Key Issues and Recommendations

## **ADMINISTRATION**

**Key Issue G-1: Administration.** As the County's residential and business population continues to grow, efficient, accountable and responsive County government administration is a priority.

Recommendations:

G1-a. Adopt a 10 year Capital Improvements Plan to identify potential capital expenditures and define a financing strategy.

G1-b. Standardize administrative procedures countywide through enhanced communication and the exchange of information.

G1-c. Facilitate communication between County staff and Constitutional Officers.

G1-d. Secure web site connections should be provided for e-mail and data access to County employees.

G1-e. Maintain and enhance the County website, including links with related web-sites where appropriate.

G1-f. Investigate measures to eliminate or reduce the high cost of turnover related training.

## EDUCATION

**Key Issue G-2: Education.** Education is one of the most important services provided by our government. More than 70% of the County's budget is spent on public education. With a rapidly increasing county population, increasing costs per pupil and increasing educational curriculum demands, it is essential that the County focus on the effectiveness of our educational process.

Education objectives are:

1. Attract and retain successful teachers.
2. All students achieve SOL objectives.
3. High school graduates should be either trained for the work place or be prepared to successfully attend institutions of post-secondary education.
4. Improvements in safety and security to facilitate an optimum learning environment.
5. Increased community awareness and support for public education as an essential part of the quality of life

Recommendations:

G-2a. Evaluate and manage per pupil cost for efficiency and for driver of costs. This should include detailed analysis of budget requests and capital improvements.

G-2b. Budget for long term school capital improvements, both academics and athletics as part of the County's CIP.

G-2c. Maintain competitive teacher salaries and provide financial support for continuing teacher education and skill improvement consistent with that of surrounding counties.

G-2d. Achieve and exceed SOL requirements by school and increase and maximize the percentage of graduates attending 2-year and 4-year colleges.

G-2e. Offer vocational/technical training that provides high school graduates training needed to successfully enter job market on a long term basis.

G-2f. Improve public school safety including law enforcement, security clearance for employees, and visitor identification.

G-2g. Enhance after-school programs and maintain a strong vocational / technical training program.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

**Key Issue G-3: Parks and Recreation.** The Greene County Department of Parks & Recreation provides recreational programs and facilities to meet the needs of county residents. The 68-acre property for the county park is in Phase I of development with additional improvements planned for the future. The Parks & Recreation department's goal is to provide a full range of offering of activities in all seasons.

### Recommendations:

G-3a. Establish an Advisory Committee including representatives consisting of private citizens, Board of Supervisors, and School Board.

G-3b. Inform residents of programs.

G-3c. Review staffing requirements and evaluate department location.

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

**Key Issue G-4: Community Services.** Greene County is served by a number of organizations and agencies providing a broad range of support to County residents, from law enforcement and emergency services to psychological, social

and financial services. It is essential that community services be provided in a well-coordinated manner to meet these obligations appropriately as well as to ensure that finite resources are utilized efficiently and effectively.

#### Recommendations:

G-4a. Establish an Interagency Resource Council, meeting regularly, to improve the integration of community services provided for residents. The IRC may include Region 10, Skyline CAP, Department of Social Services, JABA, Emergency Services, law enforcement, Greene County Transit and others.

G-4b. Designate IRC sub-committees to address specific issues or to accomplish task-specific goals, which may include:

- Identify and recruit specific organizations to participate in the IRC
- Prepare a community services resource directory for distribution to residents
- Develop a survey to identify current and unmet community service needs

#### LAW ENFORCEMENT AND EMERGENCY SERVICES

**Key Issue G-5: Law Enforcement and Emergency Services.** As Greene County has become more urbanized, the demand for law enforcement and emergency services have grown in proportion to business and population increases. With this growth, and in the face of limited financial resources, comes the need to deliver these services efficiently and effectively.

G-5a. Assure well coordinated emergency response and disaster management planning.

G-5b. Continue budgetary support for fire and rescue agencies.

G-5c. Enhance radio communications capabilities to provide coverage in as many as possible of the County's current transmission "dead spots".

G-5d. Supplement volunteers with paid fire and rescue staff, when required, to assure adequate 24-hour coverage.

G-5e. Maintain adequate School Resource Officers to safeguard school facilities and grounds as well as to spearhead community involvement in safety training and intervention.

#### SOLID WASTE

**Key Issue G-6: Solid Waste.** Greene County operates a solid waste facility and recycling center which, during 2001, was operating at approximately 50% capacity. The County landfill was closed, in compliance, in 1992.

Recommendations:

G-6a. Continue to manage and operate the solid waste facility efficiently and within budget goals.

G6-b. Maximize recycling of solid waste materials by providing options to County residents.

WASTEWATER TREATMENT

**Key Issue G-7: Wastewater Treatment.** The provision of wastewater treatment facilities is essential to expansion of commercial and industrial development in the County. The Stanardsville WWT and the Ruckersville Area Sewer Project (RASP), both owned and operated by the Rapidan Service Authority, serve 440 customers and provide 418 EDU's respectively, to the Stanardsville area and a portion of Ruckersville. Significantly increased wastewater treatment capacity will be required to meet commercial and residential development needs in the Ruckersville growth area.

Recommendations:

G-7a. Construct a WWTP to meet projected commercial and residential growth needs in the Ruckersville area in accordance with the approved CIP.

G-7b. Direct residential and commercial growth to designated areas by proactively planning and constructing services which will be restricted to those identified areas.

G-7c. Utilize public/private partnerships to assist in funding wastewater treatment system construction.

WATER

**Key Issue G-8: Water.** Due largely to topographic and geologic features, Greene County has limited surface water from the pattern of small headwaters and there are no major groundwater aquifers in the County. Approximately 66% of commercial and residential water use users utilize private groundwater wells, the remainder served by RSA, treating water pumped under a restricted DEQ permit from the Rapidan River. In 2002, Central Virginia experienced the worst drought since 1930 which has had a significant negative impact on surface and groundwater supplies.

Recommendations:

G-8a. Establish a safe and reliable water supply to meet the projected needs for business and residential growth in Greene County through 2025.

G-8b. Investigate alternative options for public water supply, including the construction of a water impoundment, to meet projected demands for the next twenty or more years.

G-8c. Develop a water shortage contingency plan to ensure adequate water supply until such time as alternative water supply sources have been identified and constructed.

G-8d. Require a commercial/industrial facility water plan that identifies water requirements for the project and measures taken to reuse, recycle and minimize water usage.

## **A VISION OF GREENE COUNTY FOR 2020**

Following is a vision of what Greene County might become in the year 2020, if the spirit and intent of the recommendations of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan are successfully implemented in the years ahead

### **Governing Principles**

In 2020, decisions in Greene County strive to balance four basic principles:

1. Land use ordinances will provide a balance between the rural character and scenic beauty of the community, while accommodating needed growth by focusing expansion to areas suitable for specific types of development.
2. Industrial, commercial and residential developments must add economic value to the community, be consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan and contribute to Greene County's future.
3. Without unduly increasing the local tax burden, Greene County creates and improves community services and facilities that enhance the quality of education, health, safety and life for its residents, and are an important element in attracting new businesses.
4. Greene County has its own identity, reflecting its unique cultural, historic, scenic and natural assets, all of which contribute to the well-being of the County.

As a result of applying these principles, Greene County has retained much of its rural character. It has attracted new tourist, retail, light industry and service businesses to strengthen its economy. It has a commercially viable agricultural segment. And, it has enhanced its own sense of community, while accommodating the unique character of several separate centers of population. Greene has avoided becoming a sprawling, unplanned bedroom suburb.

**Community Services.** In 2020, County residents, through their elected representatives and volunteer efforts, invest in the community to make it a better place to live, to work, to start a business and to visit.

- Schools provide a quality of education that prepares students for successful employment, entry to trade schools or acceptance at major universities and colleges. Teacher salaries, benefits and working conditions attract, retain and motivate quality teachers. Greene schools meet or exceed SOL standards. Schools are clean, well-equipped and not overcrowded. School administrators operate an efficient system, and increases in the education budget do not exceed the rate of growth in student population adjusted for inflation and state mandates.



- Emergency services meet or exceed median standards for Virginia. While still benefiting from the dedicated efforts of volunteers, these resources have been augmented by a core of paid professionals. All emergency services respond to an efficient centralized 911 system.
- Community services continue to evolve to meet the needs of a changing population. Urbanization and economic development have reduced the portion of County budget spent on Health and Welfare. Other areas now take a larger portion e.g. parks, recreation, cultural and community development.
- Pedestrians, bikers, riders and hikers have benefited from VDOT improvement to roads, County purchase and improvement of trails and sidewalks, proffers from developers and contributions of trail easements by landowners. Grants and public fundraising paid for several new trails.
- With a population that now exceeds 25,000, Greene County has a critical mass of people to support an increasingly broad range of community social activities and businesses.

**County Resources.** In 2020, public officials continue to take great care to protect the environment and natural resources of Greene, both for the sake of County residents and in recognition of the contributions made by tourists attracted to our mountains, rivers and rural environment. Revenues from tourism have increased faster than other economic activities during the past two decades.

- Potential pollution problems have been identified, and stream and river health enhanced, through cooperative programs with landowners, and through zoning regulations and incentives. Water storage facilities reduce the amount of water that must be siphoned from the Rapidan River and lessens the vulnerability of public water supplies to drought.
- A program has been started to work with landowners who create buffers on land adjacent to important County waterways. Such buffers create greenways that help protect the water quality and provide wildlife corridors. As a result, sport fishing has increased, water quality continues to meet high standards and tourism is enhanced.
- Historic buildings and other aspects of Greene's heritage have been preserved through the County's active encouragement of various historical societies, support for the celebration of Greene traditions, and preservation activities.

**Development.** Zoning ordinances and other approaches have been revised with great success. They maintain an attractive rural atmosphere and livable communities in designated growth areas. Several innovative commercial projects have been carefully implemented. Greene's growth has become digestible and affordable.

- A successful economic development program, supported by the County, has attracted many new businesses and expanded Greene's tax base to where it can support the incremental costs resulting from moderate residential growth.
- Proffers are used effectively, encouraging developers to contribute community amenities e.g. usable park space, green areas, ease of movement (if practical, without the necessity of a car) and convenient access to services. Voluntary cash proffers minimize the added financial burden of building or expanding Greene's capital infrastructure.
- To the extent allowed by the State, tax incentives have been used to encourage the economic viability of agricultural uses. Niche farming and agri-tourism have grown, as has the use of land for horses and trail-riding. Other land has been voluntarily conserved by landowners.
- A mix of tourist-oriented commercial and low-impact industrial businesses offer adequate services for the local community, open opportunities for local employment for wages that meet or exceed VA median wages, and allow a significant portion of Greene residents to live, shop and work in the County. Commercial activities have generally been concentrated in designated areas.

**Greene Communities.** In 2020, Greene County has developed a greater sense of community as more residents also work in the county, and as the larger population supports an increased number of local social and cultural events. Also, several centers of population have developed or retained their own unique character and sense of community. A scheduled bus service links Dyke, Stanardsville, Ruckersville and the Appalachian Trail (during peak season). Among ten identifiable centers, the three largest are:

- Stanardsville has restored many of its historical structures and revived the town center with successful businesses catering to local residents and visitors. The Greene County museum has been expanded and is open each day. A successful weekly farmers' market offers local produce and crafts, and attracts many shoppers. Tourists visit the area as they tour the scenic roads, hike the Appalachian Trail, fish, or travel the Skyline Drive. Visitors from a local conference center and resort also enjoy Stanardsville's shops and restaurants.

- Ruckersville has become a regional hub. The junction of Routes 29 and 33 is now a more congenial, accessible and safe town center. New office complexes near the town center have created many professional, clerical and service jobs. Hotel and restaurant facilities have expanded.
- Dyke has become a tourist destination. There are several equestrian centers, specialty agriculture-based businesses and attractive B&Bs that all draw visitors. New horse trails have enhanced the attractiveness of the area for riding enthusiasts.

**2020 Greene County Administration.** The County's financial condition has improved dramatically in the past two decades, even while a more proactive role has been taken in enhancing community services. This has been accomplished without excessive tax burdens. Four changes have made this possible:

- Businesses, many attracted in the past two decades, now fund a substantial portion of the County's tax base.
- Developers acknowledge the need for proffers, and their contributions have reduced the County's financial burden related to providing services to new commercial and residential developments. Since development impact fees were approved by the State, Greene has made judicious use of these opportunities to finance the required infrastructure and services resulting from growth.
- Careful zoning has directed growth to selected areas best suited to their specific use and reduced the necessity for new services and capital facilities.
- Sound, long-range planning and improved financial control systems have assisted the Board of Supervisors in balancing revenues with needed expenditures and implementing sound tax strategies.

As a result of the use and steady evolution of its policies, Greene County in 2020 is viewed as having clear goals and skillful planning, and as a resident-, business-, and visitor-friendly community that is successfully preserving its rural character. It is often used as an example of practical, well-balanced governance.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

This section recognizes the many people who made contributions to the work of the Comprehensive Plan Revision Committee and the Task Forces who made detailed studies of key areas in the county. In the course of this work over 80 public meetings were held, 21 articles published in local newspapers, 10 public forums and hearings conducted, report access and comment via internet web page and numerous specific meetings with county groups and clubs. The Task Forces alone estimates they spent more than 5,500 hours doing their work. At the risk of missing someone, the following are contributors to the overall Comprehensive Plan work.

### **Board of Supervisors**

Ken Lawson, Chairman  
Steven Catalano, Vice Chairman  
Jeri Allen  
Mickey Cox  
Kevin Welch

### **Planning Commission**

Gary Lowe, Chairman  
Greg Collier  
Helen Phillips  
Mike Skeens  
Brent Wilson

### **County Offices**

Julius Morris, Administrator  
Larry Snow, Commissioner of Revenue  
Peggy Ganoë, Office of Revenue  
Nick Hahn, Planning Director  
Marsha Alley, Planning Department  
Susan Riddle, County Engineer  
Tracy Morris, Finance Director  
Patti Vogt, Administrative Assistant  
David Lawrence, Director E911 Services  
Scott Hass, Captain, Greene County Sheriffs Department  
Ray Dingleline, Superintendent, Greene County School System  
Gail Berry, Treasurer, Greene County  
Hunter Birkhead, Finance Manager, Greene County Schools  
Alan Yost, Principal, Greene County Primary School  
James Howard, Director, Greene County Social Services  
Jack Naylor, Director, Skyline CAP  
Alan Segar, Manager, Region 10  
Brandy Painter, Shelter for Help and Emergency  
Nicole Lloyd, Shelter for Help and Emergency  
Allen Morris, Greene County Solid Waste Transfer Station and Recycling Center

### **Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission**

Harrison Rue, Director  
Bill Wanner, Deputy Director  
Chris Gensic  
Jason Overstreet

## **Comprehensive Plan Review Committee**

### **Appointed Members**

Gary Lowe, Chairman  
Darcy Higgins, Vice Chairman  
Calvin Biesecker  
Harriett Bowie  
Matt Hodges  
Georgianna McCabe  
John Moll  
Don Pamenter  
Beverly Sue Shiflett-Heroy  
Carl Schmitt

### **Volunteer Members**

Lynn Keel  
Alton Keel  
Andrea Wilkinson

## **Task Forces**

### **Future Land Use Task Force**

Carl Schmitt, Chairman  
Don Pamenter  
Betsy Carlson

Carol Merrill  
Lynn Keel  
Buddy Spencer

### **Economic Development**

Don Pamenter, Chairman  
Michael Bitrick  
Lorenzo Brown  
Betsy Carlson  
Andrew Hagy  
John Pluta  
John Silke  
Tom Zakielarz

Philip Anns  
Sandra Breeden  
Betty Brubach  
Lori Gore  
Larry Hall  
Carl Schmitt  
Brent Wilson

### **Natural Resources**

Harriett Bowie, Chairman  
Debra Houck  
Robert Orth

Will Brown  
Jill Meyer  
Carl Schmitt

### **Tourism**

Lynn Keel, Chairman  
Whit Ledford  
Betty Brubach  
Virginia Fitzhugh  
Mike Richardson

Holly Horan  
Betsy Carlson  
Lillian Baird  
Chuck Swinney  
Andrew Hagy,  
Economic Development Director

**Agriculture**

Alton Keel, Chairman  
John Moll  
Bob Roberts  
Carl Schmitt

Bob Burkholder  
Michael Morris  
Bob Runkle  
Eugene Sullivan

**Transportation**

Matt Hodges, Chairman  
Barbara Campbell  
Judy West

Calvin Biesecker  
Chris Valenzuela

**Infrastructure**

Darcy Higgins, Chairman  
Margaret Hope

Beverly Sue Shiflett-Heroy

**Other Contributors**

David Bearinger, Former Chairman, Greene County Planning Commission  
David Eddins, Realtor  
Shaun Reynolds, Powhatan County Planning Department  
Keith Burgess, Monacan Soil and Water Conservation  
Cabell Lawton, Planning Director, Fluvanna County  
John McCarthy, Rappahannock County Administrator  
Greg Wilchens, Conservation Coordinator, Culpeper Soil and Water District  
Deborah Kendall, Planning Director, Orange County  
Ridge Schuyler, Director, Piedmont Program, The Nature Conservancy of Virginia  
Jeff Werner, Land-Use Field Officer, Piedmont Environmental Council  
Frank Sweet, Former Agricultural Extension Agent, Greene County Extension Office  
Don Covey, Historian  
Dudley Pattie, General Manager, Rapidan Service Authority  
McChesney Goodall, ACE Program Coordinator, Albemarle County  
Bill Dickenson, Assistant Commissioner, Virginia Department of Agriculture  
Melvin Atkinson, Coordinator, Land Preservation Program, City of Virginia Beach  
Mary Heinrich, Director of the Mid-Atlantic Office, American Farmland Trust  
Jerry Bortner, Mayor, Stanardsville  
Mark Fried, Developer  
Andrew Hagy, Director of Economic Development  
Wally Kirtley, Realtor  
Martin Agee, Virginia Department of Forestry  
Ian MacFarlane, Virginia Department of Forestry  
Ridge Skyler, Director of Piedmont Programs, Va. Chapter of the Nature Conservancy  
Joe Miller, Head Statistics Section, National Agricultural Statistics Services, DOA  
Larry Lamb, Builder

April Holmes, Jefferson Area Board for Aging  
Larry Ferguson, Vice-Chair, Greene County School Board  
Marida Lamb, Teacher, Nathanael Greene Elementary School  
Peggy Moyers, Teacher, Ruckersville Elementary School  
Deborah Willenborg, Parent Advisory Committee, Greene County Primary School  
Stephanie Hammer, Teacher, William Monroe Middle School  
Melissa Liberatore, Parent Advisory Committee, William Monroe High School  
Rob Murphy, Blue Ridge School  
Richard Herring, Realtor and Dyke Fire Department  
Jimmy Morris, Realtor  
William Purcell, Ruckersville Fire Department  
Enoch Hord, Ruckersville Fire Department  
Mike Dean, Stanardsville Fire Department  
Wanda Hedges, Greene County Rescue Squad  
Kelly Higgins, Greene County Parks & Recreation Committee  
Tony Brown, Greene County Parks & Recreation Committee  
Katie Burnell, Greene County Parks & Recreation Committee  
Thomas Lawson  
Chuck Proctor, VDOT